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ABSTRACT

This technical manual is part of the "Focus on the Future" package which presents a group career guidance activity for secondary students designed to bring to light traditional biases and stereotyped attitudes about male and female roles and to create an awareness of how such attitudes may influence work expectations and future family relationships. The package also includes a leader's manual and eight picture stimulus sets which consist of indefinite sketches of women, men, and children engaged in a variety of work related and domestic activities. Attached to the sketches are student response sheets on which students write their reactions to the sketches for later discussion with the group. The technical manual gives the background of the development of the package. It includes sections on the sample population with whom the materials were field tested, data supporting the effectiveness of the materials, assessment of individual pictures, attitudes of the sample population as revealed in the picture response data, conclusions drawn from the field testing, and suggestions for using the materials. Numerous tables of data are included in the text. Appended are a field test assessment form for teachers and counselors, a questionnaire for students, and leader comment forms. (LMS)

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ED169227

# FOCUS ON THE FUTURE:
# Future Options/Creative Understanding Through Seeing

## Technical Manual

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# FOCUS ON THE FUTURE

## Introduction

Focus on the Future was developed as a group career guidance activity for secondary school students through a grant from the U.S. Office of Education, Women's Educational Equity Act, 1976-1977. The group activity develops around responses of individual students to a set of indefinite sketches of women, men, and children engaged in a variety of work-related and domestic activities. The indefinite quality of the sketches is intended to permit different persons to see the pictures differently, and in the process to project their own sex-stereotyped ideas about women's and men's roles into the situations.

The use of an indefinite picture procedure as a career counseling tool was originally developed for individual use with college women. Development of the Focus on the Future materials under the WEEA grant included the design of new and additional pictures and a revised presentation format appropriate for secondary school classroom settings. The final package of materials includes seven situational pictures with student response sheets, a blank picture with a student response sheet, a Leader's Manual, and this Technical Manual.

The purpose of the Technical Manual is to inform the potential user of the materials package about the development of the product and to provide evidence that it can be used successfully with groups of secondary school students. The Leader's Manual should be studied and the materials reviewed prior to reading this Technical Manual.

## Sample Population

The Focus on the Future materials were trial tested and field tested in five school systems in Northeast Ohio. An eighth grade class and an eleventh or twelfth grade class in each school system worked with the preliminary materials in the trial test. A different class at each grade level in each school used revised materials in the field test. With two exceptions (created by circumstances within the schools), the same leaders participated in both the trial test and the field test.

Class sizes ranged from twelve to 34 with the average group about 22. Field test data from an evaluative questionnaire for students were complete and usable for 156 participants, 82 female and 74 male. (Most of those excluded from the summaries were rendered unusable because the sex of the respondent was not indicated on the materials.) It is important to note that each class worked with a set of four pictures. The seven situational pictures were arranged into two sets of four with picture #7 Laboratory appearing in both sets. All students responded to the blank picture as well. Thus, while the technique as a whole was tested with 220 students, the sample size dealing with pictures #1-6 was actually about 110 students.

School systems were chosen with attention to the type of community; two systems were rural (Columbia Station Local Schools and Mentor Local Schools), two were suburban (Maple Heights and Westlake Schools), and one was a medium-sized city (Cleveland Heights Schools). Of the two suburban communities, one is a predominately blue collar, while the other is a predominately white collar community.

## Data Supporting the Effectiveness of the Focus on the Future Materials and Procedures

Data discussed in this section were collected by means of two self-report instruments, one for students and one for leaders. Samples of the actual questionnaires appear in Appendix A. Data from the Questionnaire for Students are summarized in Table 1 in percentages. In each case, the percentage is calculated by dividing the total number of usable response sheets in a given category (e.g. eighth grade females, twelfth grade males, all females) into the number of students in that category who marked a given answer.

Data from the Field Test Assessment Form for Teachers and Counselors are summarized in Table 2. Since only nine leaders (of 10) completed the form, results in all cases are reported as raw numbers. Where applicable, statements from the Leader Comments sheets (Appendix B) are integrated with the discussion.

Discussion of user reactions to the Focus on the Future materials and procedures is divided into sections addressing the following factors:

I. Interest

II. Learning/Accomplishment of Objectives

III. Appropriateness of Procedures

IV. Leader's Manual

Data from both student and leader responses are reported for the first three categories, while leaders alone commented on the Leader's Manual.

Inspection of the data indicated no important differences in sex stereotyping among classes in the urban, suburban, and rural settings, even though environmental artifacts were somewhat different. Therefore, no separate tabulations of data for the different settings are presented.

Table 1

Questionnaire for Students
Responses Summarized in Percentages

| | 8th | | | 12th | | | Total | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | M | F | T | M | F | T | M | F | T |
| Interest | | | | | | | | | |
| Class discussion was interesting. | 76 | 68 | 72 | 40 | 39 | 39 | 64 | 52 | 58 |
| Class discussion was not interesting. | 16 | 13 | 15 | 28 | 25 | 26 | 20 | 20 | 20 |
| Responding to the blank picture was interesting. | 55 | 55 | 55 | 60 | 39 | 46 | 57 | 46 | 51 |
| The technique used was fun. | 47 | 45 | 46 | 36 | 23 | 28 | 43 | 33 | 38 |
| Learning/Accomplishment of Objectives | | | | | | | | | |
| Class discussion helped me learn about sex stereotyping. | 53 | 29 | 43 | 40 | 32 | 34 | 49 | 30 | 39 |
| Class discussion helped me see how others think. | 59 | 45 | 53 | 36 | 59 | 51 | 51 | 52 | 52 |
| The technique made me think differently. | 51 | 45 | 48 | 36 | 41 | 39 | 46 | 43 | 44 |
| The technique did not make me think differently. | 14 | 5 | 10 | 28 | 23 | 25 | 19 | 15 | 17 |
| The technique was worthwhile, even though it took time. | 43 | 61 | 51 | 44 | 34 | 38 | 43 | 46 | 45 |
| The technique was time-consuming and not worthwhile. | 14 | 5 | 10 | 24 | 16 | 19 | 18 | 10 | 14 |
| Responding to the blank picture made me think about my future. | 47 | 50 | 48 | 44 | 52 | 49 | 46 | 51 | 49 |
| Responding to the blank picture was hard. | 43 | 21 | 33 | 48 | 45 | 46 | 45 | 34 | 39 |
| Appropriateness of Procedures | | | | | | | | | |
| The material could be used in any junior high school grade. | 67 | 87 | 76 | 52 | 45 | 48 | 62 | 65 | 63 |
| The material could be used in any high school grade. | 55 | 45 | 51 | 44 | 70 | 61 | 51 | 59 | 55 |
| Three sessions were enough. | 65 | 63 | 64 | 68 | 75 | 72 | 66 | 70 | 68 |
| Three sessions were too many. | 14 | 3 | 9 | 20 | 18 | 19 | 16 | 11 | 13 |
| Three sessions were too few. | 22 | 24 | 23 | 12 | 4 | 7 | 18 | 15 | 16 |

| | 8th | | | 12th | | | Total | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | M | F | T | M | F | T | M | F | T |
| Four pictures were enough. | 82 | 82 | 82 | 60 | 66 | 64 | 74 | 73 | 74 |
| Four pictures were too many. | 16 | 7 | 13 | 32 | 30 | 30 | 22 | 20 | 21 |
| Four pictures were too few. | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 9 | 9 | 8 | 9 | 8 |
| Total number of respondents | 49 | 38 | 87 | 25 | 44 | 69 | 74 | 82 | 156 |

Table 2

Field Test Assessment Form for Teachers and Counselors
Responses Reported as Proportion of Leaders*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Interest: To what extent were you able to develop student interest in the materials: | Well | 2/9 |
| | Adequately | 7/9 |
| | Inadequately | 0/9 |
| **Learning/Accomplishment of Objectives** | | |
| Did the materials lead to useful discussions of the role of sex stereotyping in career choice? | Yes | 9/9 |
| | No | 0/9 |
| Did the material encourage a useful discussion of future planning? | Yes | 7/9 |
| | No | 1/9 |
| The use of the blank picture to provide personal focus for the students was: | Very effective | 2/9 |
| | Effective | 6/9 |
| | Ineffective | 1/9 |
| | Other | 1/9 |
| Did the material and technique allow you to meet the objectives outlined? | Well | 2/9 |
| | Adequately | 7/9 |
| | Inadequately | 0/9 |
| Would it be worthwhile for your school to acquire the materials? | Yes | 7/9 |
| | No | 1/9 |
| **Appropriateness of Procedures** | | |
| Group Size: Do you think the size of the group influenced the effectiveness of the technique? | Yes | 7/9 |
| | No | 2/9 |
| Male/Female Grouping: Do you think the composition of the group influenced the effectiveness of the technique? | Yes | 6/9 |
| | No | 3/9 |
| Grade Level: Do you think the grade level of the students influenced the effectiveness of the technique? | Yes | 5/9 |
| | No | 3/9 |
| Time: Were three class periods enough time to cover the materials adequately? | Yes | 3/9 |
| | No | 6/9 |
| Number of Pictures: Did you find four pictures too many, too few, or just enough to stimulate discussion? | Too many | 4/9 |
| | Too few | 3/9 |
| | Enough | 2/9 |
| Picture Variety: Did each of the four pictures stimulate different ideas for discussion? | Yes | 7/9 |
| | No | 2/9 |

*Numerator of fraction indicates actual number of leaders marking a given response. Denominator of fraction is total number of leaders.

Leader's Manual

| | |
|---|---|
| Was the format outlined in the Leader's Manual workable? | |
| Yes | 7/9 |
| No | 2/9 |
| Did the Leader's Manual provide adequate background and preparation for conducting the class? | |
| Yes | 9/9 |
| No | 0/9 |
| Did you develop techniques other than those outlined in the Leader's Manual? | |
| Yes | 1/9 |
| No | 8/9 |

I. Interest

Interest was considered relevant in considering the effectiveness of the Focus on the Future procedure; it provides both information about student involvement with the ideas presented and about the means by which the ideas were presented. Fifty-eight per cent of all students responded that class discussion about the pictures was interesting, while 20% responded that it was not. Twenty-two per cent did not rank either category. Though comparison data with other types of instructional units are not available, it seems this is a high proportion of students who both experienced interest in the activities and were willing to say so in their reports.

Some important subgroup findings are evident in the data. Eighth grade classes reported a substantially higher incidence (72%) of interest when compared with twelfth grade classes (39%). When comparing the incidence of stated interest for male and female respondents, no clear difference is apparent for 12th graders. At the eighth grade level, 76% of boys as compared with 68% of girls reported that they were interested.

Leaders were asked to indicate how well they were able to develop student interest in the materials. Two of nine leaders indicated "well" and seven indicated "adequately."

Students were also asked to tell whether responding to the blank picture was interesting. Fifty-one per cent said it was. Once again, eighth graders voiced greater interest (55%) than twelfth graders (46%). Twelfth grade males reported the greatest interest in this task (60% liked it), while twelfth grade females reported the least interest (39%). This is an interesting finding given that both sexes in the eighth grade group reported the same level of interest (55% liked it). This may suggest that

males become more interested in future-oriented career questions as they approach the end of high school, while females become less interested.

II. Learning/Accomplishment of Objectives

Several probes in both the student and the leader questionnaires asked for impressions about the learning that took place. Student responses are reported first, followed by leader responses.

Student Responses

Overall, 39% of the students reported the classes had helped them learn more about the meaning of sex stereotyping. Eighth graders reported learning more frequently than twelfth graders, males more than females, and the differential between boys and girls was greater at grade eight. Fifty-three per cent of eighth grade boys reported new learning. It seems safe to say that males have more to learn about the subject of sex stereotyping and that eighth grade boys may be more deficient than twelfth grade boys. (We were both surprised and pleased to learn that students in some twelfth grade classes had been exposed to previous discussion of stereotyping in the regular curriculum.)

Just over half the students reported the Focus on the Future classes had helped them learn how others think. While there was no difference in the combined female/male responses between the two grades, it is interesting that eighth grade males and 12th grade females reported the highest incidence of new learning. Again the eighth grade boys seem to show the effects of a learning deficit. At grade 12, 59% of the females, as contrasted with only 36% of males, reported increased knowledge of how others think. Our anecdotal material suggests that, in many instances, male students were outspoken in their views that women's first obligation is to

traditional roles. It may be that young women were surprised to learn how pervasive that view was, while young men had frequently been exposed to a feminist view.

Forty-four per cent of all students indicated the procedure made them think differently about certain things than they had before. Eighth graders reported change more frequently than twelfth graders (48% to 39%). Boys reported a greater incidence of change at eighth grade, while girls reported greater incidence of change at grade twelve. We would hypothesize that eighth grade boys gained new information, and that twelfth grade boys may have been resistant to the new information. In any case, the incidence of all students reporting changes in their thinking is encouraging.

Another question asked of students dealt with the "worthwhileness" of the activity in relation to the time it took. Forty-five per cent said it was "worthwhile even though it took time" to look at the pictures, write about them, and discuss the responses. Eighth graders were more favorably impressed than seniors. Males at both levels rated worthwhileness at about the mean level for all respondents, while junior high girls tended to see the work as more worthwhile and senior high girls tended to see it less worthwhile. These trends are similar to those reported above for interest level, and the two factors may not be independent.

Forty-nine per cent of all students said that responding to the blank picture caused them to think about their futures. Differences between eighth and twelfth grade students on this dimension were insignificant, though at both grade levels females were slightly more inclined than males to indicate new thinking (51% to 46%). Another question focused on whether responding to the blank picture was difficult. Sex and grade differences

both appeared here. Senior high males were most likely to report it was difficult, followed by senior high females, eighth grade males and finally eighth grade females. The incidence of reported difficulty ranged from 48% for senior males to 21% for eighth grade females. One hypothesis that might account for this pattern is that degree of difficulty in responding to the blank picture corresponds with age-related pressure to implement a life-career plan.

Leader Responses

Moving to group leader responses, all nine indicated the program format led to useful discussion of the role of sex stereotyping in career choice. Anecdotal comments included a statement that it "made students aware of their sex-role hang-ups" and caused them to focus on the "home-role and work-role division." With respect to the blank picture, two leaders said it was very effective and six said it was effective in bringing a personal focus to the discussion. One said it was ineffective because students knew what was expected and "went the opposite." In fact, most leaders reported a high incidence of traditional roles in the students' responses to the blank pictures, a fact corroborated by our review of the students' written responses on the stimulus sheets.

From the overview of all data, it seems safe to say there was personal focus in the responses -- even though they were not without stereotyping. The goal of the procedure was to promote useful discussion of stereotyping as it relates to future planning, but it would not be reasonable to expect such exposure to do more than increase awareness levels and raise questions. If responses on the blank picture had been without stereotyping, it would be necessary to question the sincerity of the respondents.

Two global questions were designed to get the leaders' overall assessment of the procedure. First they were asked how well the Focus on the Future materials and technique allowed them to meet the objectives stated in the Leader's Manual. Two responded "well" and seven "adequately," while no one responded "inadequately." Asked if they believed it would be worthwhile for their schools to acquire sets of the material, seven of nine said "yes," one said "no," and one said "undecided but leaning toward yes." Of those who indicated "yes," one leader of a twelfth grade group indicated that, if purchased, the material would be better for a lower grade. The data on teacher/counselor acceptance of the materials are quite supportive.

III. Appropriateness of Procedures

In addition to establishing whether the picture stimulus procedure used in this project could be adapted for group administration, it was a goal of this project to collect information about the optimal conditions for using the procedure. The following paragraphs discuss our findings about the procedures.

A. Group size. Leaders were asked to comment on whether group size influenced the effectiveness of the technique. Seven of the nine said that it did, and the two who said "no" had comparatively small groups. Leaders suggested that a group of 15 would be good and that 20 would be about maximum. We had no group smaller than 12 and thus cannot comment on a lower size limit. Leaders with groups of around 30 felt they could not involve all students in the discussion, that it was "hit and skip."

B. Leaders were asked if the composition of the group (males, females, minorities) influenced the effectiveness of the technique. Six said "yes" and three said "no." Examining their anecdotal comments, it became clear that groups that were predominately one sex (a ratio of two to one) did not function as well as groups that were closer to being evenly distributed between the two sexes. No leader comments were directed to minority participation.

C. Students and leaders were both asked to comment on the grade level at which the materials would work best. Looking first at student responses, 63% said the materials could be used in any junior high grade and 55% said it could be used in any senior high grade. Looking further, both junior high students and senior high students thought it would be best at their own level. Female students at both levels seemed especially supportive of using the Focus on the Future procedure with their own contemporaries. Eighty-seven per cent of eighth grade girls said the materials would be acceptable for any junior high class, while 70% of senior girls said the materials would be acceptable for any senior high grade. Senior males responded that the procedure would be best in junior high and thus stated an opinion counter to the general trend. Moving to leader comments, five thought the grade level made a difference in the effectiveness of the procedure, three did not. One leader thought eighth graders too "immature," but most comments from senior high leaders suggested the materials should be used earlier than grade 12.

As noted earlier in this report, interest levels were lower with twelfth grade classes, and there seemed to be some attitude that the discussion was "kid's stuff." While one must wonder whether this is pseudomaturity, the conclusion about grade level that may be optimal is more likely junior high.

D. Number of sessions. Students overwhelmingly responded that three sessions were enough to write the responses and have worthwhile class discussion. Sixty-eight per cent indicated that three sessions were adequate, with the remaining numbers about equally divided between "too few" and "too many." Seniors were more likely to say there were too many sessions, while eighth graders were more likely to say there were too few.

Six of the nine leaders said that three sessions were insufficient to use the materials well; three felt the time was adequate.

It is difficult to reach a firm conclusion about the time question based on the above data. However, leader comments related number of sessions and number of pictures in such a way that we are inclined to recommend the three-session procedure with the option for the group leader to use fewer pictures with more discussion if that facilitates moving toward the objectives more efficiently.

E. Number of pictures. As with number of sessions, students generally reported the number of pictures was about right. Seventy-four per cent thought four pictures were enough to start discussion without being too much work. (Some students

double-marked indicating "enough or too many" or "enough or too few," which resulted in percentages over 100 total.) The additional message in the data is that if a change were to be made, it should be in the direction of fewer rather than more; this trend was especially true for the senior high subjects.

Leaders were divided as to how many pictures were best, with two saying the number was just right, two saying there were too few, and four saying there were too many. This finding corroborates the comment in D above, which suggests teacher/counselor judgment should be exercised on the relationship of number of pictures to amount of time.

F. Appropriate variety in the picture sets. In order to determine whether each of the sets of four pictures we assembled contained sufficient variety, we asked leaders to comment on whether each of the four pictures in the set stimulated different ideas for discussion. Seven of the nine leaders responded that each picture did add new stimulus.

IV. Leader's Manual

The Leader's Manual for the field test phase of the project was designed so that a teacher or counselor could present the three-session exercise simply by following the directions. In order to learn how adequately we accomplished that objective, leaders were asked whether the format of the sessions as outlined in the manual was workable and whether the manual provided adequate background for preparing and conducting the sessions. Seven of nine leaders indicated the format was workable. The comments from the two who suggested

changes urged fewer pictures or longer time in the one instance, and less writing by the students in the other instance. It is our belief that both these suggestions might be accommodated by allowing more leader judgment on such matters -- an outcome that would be very likely if teachers/counselors who had selected the materials were using them in a non-research administration. All nine leaders indicated the manual was adequate for preparing and conducting the activity.

The manual suggested in a number of places that leaders could apply techniques in the discussion sections that they believed would facilitate good interaction. Only one of the nine leaders reported doing any activity not specified in the manual. That leader organized small discussion groups after the students wrote their responses to the stimulus sets but prior to bringing all students into a general discussion; the leader reported satisfaction with the procedure, and it appears to the authors that such a technique might be particularly helpful in working with groups larger than fifteen.

## Assessment of Individual Pictures

The response cues accompanying each picture often evoked written responses that were rich in imaginative detail, offering a broad range of sociological commentary. For the purposes of this project, however, these responses were analyzed specifically for data that was significant to the general development of the technique.

### Variety of Responses

A first consideration in evaluating each of the picture stimulus sets was whether it evoked a variety of responses. Since a central facet of the technique was the sharing of responses in a classroom setting for the purposes of bringing out differences in perception of the same picture, we

had to assure that such differences in fact existed. If all students in a classroom were to give the same or similar responses to the cues, there might be little to discuss. If, on the other hand, students had differing reactions to share, there would be a solid basis for a productive "give and take" discussion.

An index of variety of response for each picture, using one or more of the verbal cues, was developed. This index was calculated by dividing the number of different responses to an appropriate cue(s) (different roles assigned to persons in the pictures) by the total number of respondents. The range for the index of variety of response (Table 3) for the situational pictures was from 45% for picture #1, Leaving Home, to 73.8% for picture #6, Office. The blank picture elicited even more varied responses (91.8% stated different roles). The index implied that even for the picture with the least variety in response, nearly half the respondents offered different responses and suggests that there was a sound basis for discussion established with each picture stimulus set.

Sex Stereotyping in the Responses

A second concern in evaluating the pictures was their substantive value in eliciting sex-stereotyped responses. A content analysis was made of student responses to the verbal cues for each picture. Attention was directed to two criteria:

1. Did the responses include sex-related role designations that were traditional or non-traditional?
2. Was there a positive or negative feeling tone associated with such role designations?

These criteria were applied to the student responses to all eight pictures.

Table 3

Variety of Response

| Picture | Percent of Variety* | n |
|---|---|---|
| #1, Leaving Home | 45.2 | 116 |
| #2, Kitchen | 57.4 | 103 |
| #3, Work Line | 72.9 | 105 |
| #4, Travelers | 56.1 | 106 |
| #5, Store | 47.0 | 119 |
| #6, Office | 73.8 | 111 |
| #7, Laboratory | 57.2 | 201 |
| #8, Yourself in the Future | 91.8 | 207 |

*Number of different role designations divided by number of respondents.

Tabulations combining responses from all respondents in relation to these criteria appear in Tables 4-11. These percentages were derived by dividing the number of responses reflecting the criteria by the total number of students responding to the picture.

It should be noted that certain pictures required adaptation of the criteria because of the phrasing of a particular response cue. For example in picture #7, Laboratory, the designation of a leadership or subordinate role for male and female was the pertinent dimension coded rather than the traditional/non-traditional delineation. A leadership dimension was also used for picture #3, Work Line. In picture #5, Store, the response cues do not specifically refer to a female role and, therefore, the positive and negative feelings relate to "man" and "child" rather than male and female. In several pictures--#3, Work Line, #5, Store, and #6, Office--a "neutral" feeling category was included because of the frequency with which it appeared, in contrast to pictures #1, #2, #4, and #7 where it appeared so infrequently as to be less than 1%.

Because the response cues accompanying the blank picture, #8, reflected self-report projections rather than responses to a picture stimulus, these responses also necessitated a modification of the criteria. The traditional/non-traditional percentages refer to the types of work students pictured <u>themselves</u> doing 15 years hence. Although many of these future work-role designations can be easily classified (i.e., housewife or secretary as traditional for females; mechanic, football player as traditional for males), certain occupations do not lend themselves to such clear classification, particularly at a time when both women and men are entering "non-traditional" fields at an increasing rate. An occupation was classified as

non-traditional for a particular sex when the U.S. Department of Labor says that less than 25% of the persons in the field are of that sex.[1] When a female projected herself as "doctor," this was considered to be non-traditional as was a male designating himself as an "elementary teacher," although increasingly more women are entering medicine as a profession and more men are becoming teachers of young children. Certain occupations have a basically "neutral" connotation with no sex-linkage such as "researcher." These types of occupations were designated by so few respondents that a neutral occupational category was not included in the final table.

Additional response cues to blank picture #8 asked students to describe "people and things" that would be important, as well as what they liked "most" and "least" in their lives 15 years in the future.

In coding and analyzing these data, it became apparent that the response patterns could best be classified according to positive and negative feelings regarding certain particular aspects of life; i.e. adulthood, family-related, work-related, material goods-related and general types of conditions such as "war" and "taxes." Occasionally students responded in very broad terms with such expressions as "nothing" or "everything." Since these responses were infrequent and did not significantly influence the dimensions listed, they were not included in the final classification.

---

[1] Women Workers Today, Employment Standards Administration, 1976.

Table 4

Picture #1, Leaving Home
Role and Affect Responses
n=116

| | Female | Male |
|---|---|---|
| Responses designating traditional role for | 86.2% | 97.4% |
| Responses designating non-traditional role for | 13.4% | .0% |
| Responses designating "content" for | 60.9% | 72.8% |
| Responses designating "discontent" for | 35.3% | 25.1% |

Table 5

Picture #2, Kitchen
Role and Affect Responses
n=103

| | Female | Male |
|---|---|---|
| Responses designating traditional role for | 78.3% | 62.2% |
| Responses designating non-traditional role for | 10.2% | 21.2% |
| Responses designating "happy" for | 69.2% | 74.4% |
| Responses designating "not happy" for | 25.8% | 21.8% |

Table 6

Picture #3, Work Line
Role and Affect Responses
n=105

| | Female | Male |
|---|---|---|
| Responses designating leadership role to | 13.3% | 34.3% |
| Responses designating positive feelings to | 72.4% | 99.0% |
| Responses designating neutral feelings to | 6.7% | 67.6% |
| Responses designating negative feelings to | 20.0% | 78.1% |
| Responses designating traditional after work activities to | 80.0% | 95.3% |
| Responses designating non-traditional after work activities to | 10.5% | 10.5% |

Table 7

Picture #4, Travelers
Role and Affect Responses
n=106

| | Female | Male |
|---|---|---|
| Responses designating traditional role for | 96.8% | 99.1% |
| Responses designating non-traditional role for | 3.0% | .6% |
| Responses designating positive feelings about the trip to | 71.2% | 77.3% |
| Responses designating negative feelings about the trip to | 55.4% | 57.2% |

Table 8

Picture #5, Store
Role and Affect Responses
n=119

| | | Male |
|---|---|---|
| Responses designating traditional role for | | 60.5% |
| Responses designating non-traditional role for | | 31.9% |
| | Child | Man |
| Responses designating positive feelings to | 47.8% | 10.1% |
| Responses designating neutral feelings to | 6.7% | 17.3% |
| Responses designating negative feelings to | 38.6% | 63.8% |

Table 9

Picture #6, Office
Role and Affect Responses
n=111

| | Female | Male |
|---|---|---|
| Responses designating traditional role for | 64.8% | 99.0% |
| Responses designating non-traditional role for | 14.4% | .04% |
| Responses expressing positive feeling about salary of | 35.1% | 43.7% |
| Responses expressing neutral feeling about salary of | 17.1% | 17.6% |
| Responses expressing negative feeling about salary of | 42.3% | 34.2% |

Table 10

Picture #7, Laboratory
Role and Affect Responses
n=201

| | Female | Male |
|---|---|---|
| Responses designating subordinate role for | 50.7% | 21.4% |
| Responses designating equal role | 23.0% | |
| Responses designating leadership role for | 23.3% | 51.7% |
| | Positive/ Negative | |
| Responses affirming female/male work well together | 85.6% | |
| Responses denying female/male work well together | 12.4% | |

Table 11

Picture #8, Blank
Role and Affect Responses
n=207

| | Female | Male |
|---|---|---|
| Responses projecting a traditional role by | 86.1% | 95.7% |
| Responses projecting a non-traditional role by | 11.5% | 2.4% |
| | Positive | Negative |
| Responses relating to adulthood | 21.7% | 9.1% |
| Responses relating to family relationships | 34.3% | 13.5% |
| Responses relating to work | 39.6% | 34.3% |
| Responses relating to material goods | 11.1% | 4.8% |
| Responses relating to general conditions (i.e. war, taxes) | .03% | 21.3% |

A review of the data in Tables 4-11 reveals that each picture stimulated both traditional and non-traditional role designations for both males and females as well as both positive and negative feelings. Although certain pictures (for example, #1, Leaving Home, #4, Travelers, #6, Office) consistently evoked a traditional role designation for males from respondents, these same pictures stimulated differences in the female role designation and in affect responses from respondents. We concluded that all pictures with the related cues did in fact evoke responses that indicated sex stereotyping and related affective quality.

Leader Assessment

In evaluating the individual pictures it is relevant to refer to the results of the Teacher/Counselor Assessment Form, Question #12, which asked leaders to rate the pictures they used. All pictures were rated excellent or adequate by a majority of the leaders, although #1, Leaving Home, #2, Kitchen, and #7, Laboratory, each received one inadequate rating.

Summary

The overall evaluation of the stimulus materials suggests that all eight pictures and accompanying cues fulfilled the basic aims of the project. Each picture stimulated productive responses in relation to sex stereotyping, each picture provided sufficient variety of response to stimulate class discussion and each picture was rated excellent or adequate by a significant majority of teachers and counselors. As a result of these positive findings, the decision was made to retain all eight pictures for the final package.

## Attitudes of the Sample Population as Revealed in the Picture Response Data

Although the response data were analyzed primarily to evaluate the effectiveness of the stimulus materials, these data also produced interesting findings relating to the attitudes of the respondents. Thus Tables 4-11, while providing information relevant to the assessment of each picture, also provide comparative data on how students responded to pictures that ambiguously depict men and women in work and domestic situations.

A review of these tables indicates that both males and females were consistently designated in traditional roles far more frequently than in non-traditional roles. These tables also show that males were consistently designated with more positive feelings about their roles. It is worthwhile to note that males were designated in traditional roles far more frequently than females (at the extreme range of 95% or more) for all but three pictures. These three exceptions were picture #2, Kitchen, picture #5, Store, and picture #7, Laboratory.

In pictures #2, Kitchen, and #5, Store, males are shown in domestically related situations. Students responded to these pictures by describing more non-traditional roles than was typical for pictures that were work related.

Picture #7, Laboratory, evoked more ambiguity in relation to role designation than any other scene. In picture #7, students were asked to describe what kind of work each person does. One male student in an eighth grade class stated, "The woman does biological research for the medical administration of the College. She also teaches some classes on medicine in the laboratory. The man is a student teacher and is currently

working under the woman, helping to teach her classes. Another male in the same class states, "She is a biochemist. She works on the science staff to try to figure out biological problems. He is another biochemist. He is her associate and teacher."

In a twelfth grade class, a female student states, "She is a medical laboratory technician. She appears to be evaluating the blood of a patient that was admitted for a disease that was rare. He is the doctor and is reviewing the lab findings of his patient to determine whether surgery is needed or not." Another female in the same class states, "She is a major doctor, a surgeon. Top one of the whole hospital. He is training to be a laboratory assistant. He is new in the field and wants to learn all he can."

Although no definite conclusion can be drawn from these findings, the results suggest that the specific scientific work setting evokes less traditional stereotyping than was true for the other pictures.

In contrast to the reverse or equal role designation students gave to picture #7, Laboratory, are the responses to picture #6, Office. In the 12th grade class, eighteen of the 21 responding students designated the woman as a "secretary" or a "receptionist." The six other designations included "boss" (female respondent), "CPA" (female respondent), two "supervisor" (male and female respondents), and two "office manager" (male and female respondents). All students in the class designated the two men in the picture in traditional executive or management-type positions, except one male who designated the "man on the left" as a "secretary."

Picture #1, Leaving Home, and picture #4, Travelers, were not specifically work-related pictures. Nevertheless, the degree of stereotyping was high.

Some samples of student responses highlight the attitudes elicited. For example, in picture #1, Leaving Home, although the woman was often seen as "going shopping" or "visiting," she was also seen as going to work; but the work was more frequently traditional, such as "nurse," "teacher," "secretary," and even "Avon lady" and far less often seen as non-traditional, such as "lawyer" or "doctor." Similarly, in picture #4, Travelers, the woman was most often seen as seeking a traditional job such as "secretary," "stewardess," "fashion designer," "model," and very infrequently as seeking a non-traditional job such as "high executive" or "manager," whereas the man was seen most often as seeking a management or professional level position.

The information in Tables 4-11 reports data from all respondents to each picture. Table 12 summarizes data from all pictures according to the non-traditional response made by eighth graders, by twelfth graders, by males, and by females.

A review of Table 12 shows that all four subgroups designated both females and males in non-traditional roles infrequently. No percentage exceeds 18.3. There are, however, some similarities as well as differences between groups that are apparent.

All eighth grade students and all males designated both males and females non-traditionally at approximately the same small percentage level (10.4% to 12.0%) whereas twelfth grade students and females designated both males and females non-traditionally at a higher percentage level. It is particularly notable that both twelfth graders and females designated females in non-traditional roles at the peak percentage level of 18+.

Table 12

Non-Traditional Responses by Subgroups

| | Designated by | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 8th grade student responses n=595 | 12th grade student responses n=466 | Male student responses n=525 | Female student responses n=429 |
| Males designated in non-traditional roles | 10.40% | 12.01% | 11.04% | 15.15% |
| | n=538 | n=404 | n=375 | n=459 |
| Females designated in non-traditional roles | 10.97% | 18.07% | 12.00% | 18.30% |

It is apparent from this discussion that the majority of students in the sample population revealed traditional attitudes regarding the roles of men and women. The data did show, however, certain subtleties and variations in these expressions of sex stereotyping relating to the particular stimuli used, as well as to the grade level and sex of the respondents. Future use of Focus on the Future can provide additional insight and information relating to these subtleties and variations in student attitudes. The developers encourage creative use of the materials for such purposes.

## Conclusions

Focus on the Future materials used with secondary school students led to useful discussion of sex stereotyping and its implications for future planning. Students became more familiar with the concept of sex stereotyping, more able to recognize sex stereotyping in their own thinking and that of others, and more aware of the impact of sex stereotyping on future planning.

The seven situational pictures elicit life-career role references in student responses that relate to stereotyping. The blank picture helps students to personalize the material and relate it to their own planning.

The material is appropriate for use at both the lower and upper grade levels of secondary school. Evidence of increased understanding of sex stereotyping and its implications were not markedly different when eighth and twelfth grades were compared. While the materials and procedures may be used effectively with secondary school students at any level, it appeared that younger students responded with more interest.

The Focus on the Future materials and procedures are effective with coed groups and are most effective when there are approximately the same numbers of males and females in a group.

The Focus on the Future materials and procedures are most effective with groups in the size range of 15-20 students although leaders reported success with both smaller and larger groups.

The basic procedures presented in the Leader's Manual provide an adequate basis for structuring and leading groups. Leaders, however, should be encouraged to use professional skill and judgment in modifying the procedures to suit personal styles and conditions of their specific settings.

The Focus on the Future materials and procedures may be used in urban, suburban, and rural settings as indicated by the comparability of outcomes across all (urban, suburban, and rural) systems and notwithstanding the subjective content reflecting community related backgrounds.

## Using Focus on the Future

The materials and procedures of Focus on the Future were judged to be effective in stimulating an awareness of sex stereotyping and its implications for future planning across all secondary school grade levels and groupings. The complete package, therefore, offers secondary school personnel many options for use.

The package is obviously suitable for career guidance classes or groups in grades 8-12. The self-projecting element (blank picture) suggests that it would be a productive introductory unit to stimulate an awareness of the need for further planning. But counselors are encouraged to integrate the material and procedures in any manner that they deem appropriate to their guidance programs.

The positive assessment of the sex stereotyping components of Focus on the Future suggests that it has implications for use in classes other than those geared specifically to career guidance. The discussions relating to work and domestic roles stimulated by the materials imply that Focus on the Future could be used productively in social studies units, psychology classes, and family life curriculums.

The package provides seven pictures and a blank picture; the Leader's Manual lesson plans suggest use of four pictures plus the blank. Leaders thus have a choice of which of the four pictures to use. Leaders may wish to vary the activity further by using fewer or more pictures. In some class settings, leaders may feel that use of the blank picture is not appropriate. In certain settings the use of only one or two pictures may be more satisfactory than use of the full lesson plan.

Although the total Focus on the Future package provides complete instructions and requires no specific training to be used, the options and variations in using the technique suggest that the guidance staff may wish to assume responsibility for the activity within a particular school. The material and procedures offer a convenient format for an in-service workshop on sex stereotyping and its implications for various classroom settings. Faculty and staff attending such a workshop would have the opportunity to become thoroughly familiar with the Focus on the Future materials and the variations in how they could be used. When a decision is made to use Focus on the Future in more than one classroom or at more than one grade level, the opportunity for intergroup comparisons is provided. Such comparisons, derived by analyzing and tabulating response patterns, can

provide school personnel with data and information on student attitudes relating to sex stereotyping that could prove useful in future programming and curriculum planning.

It is obvious that Focus on the Future offers many options and variations for future use. This discussion has highlighted some that are readily apparent. The developers encourage school personnel to use Focus on the Future creatively, adapting the materials and procedures to their particular needs and purposes.

## APPENDIX A

Field Test Assessment Form for Teachers and Counselors

Questionnaire for Students

FOCUS ON THE FUTURE

Field Test Assessment Form for Teachers and Counselors

School System:_____ Name of Respondent:_____ Teacher( ) Counselor( )

Grade Level:_____ Type of class:_____ (English, Guidance, etc.) Size of Class:_____

Composition of Class: Males:_____ Females:_____ Minorities:_____

---

1. To what extent were you able to develop student interest in the materials?

   Well_____ Adequately_____ Inadequately_____

   Please explain briefly:

2. Did you think the size of the group influenced the effectiveness of the technique? If so, what size group do you think would be better?

3. Do you think the composition (males, females, minorities) of the group influenced the effectiveness of the technique? If so, in what way?

4. Do you think the grade level of the students influenced the effectiveness of the technique? If so, in what way?

5. Did the Focus on the Future material lead to useful discussions of the role of sex stereotyping in career choice? Please explain briefly:

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO USE THE REVERSE SIDE, OR ANOTHER SHEET OF PAPER, IF NECESSARY.

6. Did the Focus on the Future material encourage a useful discussion of future planning? Please explain briefly:

7. Did three class periods provide you with enough time to adequately cover all of the materials?

8. Did you find the format of the class sessions as outlined in the Leader's Manual workable? If not, what improvements would you suggest be made?

9. Did the Leader's Manual provide adequate background and preparation for conducting the class sessions? If not, what revisions would you make? What kinds of material should be added?

10. Did you develop new techniques or procedures other than those outlined in the Leader's Manual that proved effective for you? Please explain:

11. Did you find four situational pictures too many, too few, or just enough to stimulate discussion? Please explain:

12. Please circle the pictures you used and rate their usefulness in eliciting interesting discussion material (Excellent/Adequate/Inadequate):

Picture #1: Leaving Home _____
Picture #2: Kitchen _____
Picture #3: Work Line _____ (continued)

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO USE THE REVERSE SIDE, OR ANOTHER SHEET OF PAPER, IF NECESSARY.

Picture #4: Travelers _____
Picture #5: Store _____
Picture #6: Office _____
Picture #7: Laboratory _____

Can you suggest any revisions or additions to the questions accompanying each picture?

3. Did each of the four pictures stimulate different ideas for discussion, or was any one of the pictures too much like another? Please explain:

4. The use of the Blank Picture Exercise to provide a personal focus for students was:

a. Very effective_____ c. Ineffective_____
b. Effective_____ d. Other reactions_____

Please explain briefly:

5. How well did the Focus on the Future materials and technique allow you to meet the objective outlined on Page One of the Leader's Manual?

Well_____ Adequately_____ Inadequately_____

Please explain briefly:

6. Would you feel it would be worthwhile for your school to acquire the Focus on the Future materials so that other teachers and counselors could use them?

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO USE THE REVERSE SIDE, OR ANOTHER SHEET OF PAPER, IF NECESSARY.

FOCUS ON THE FUTURE
Questionnaire for Students

Your name_____Grade_____School_____

The Focus on the Future materials are being developed for students like yourself. It would be very helpful to the developers if you would answer the following questions. Tell us those things that will help us make the program better for other students.

1) CLASS DISCUSSION ABOUT THE PICTURES: (check as many as apply)

_____Was interesting.

_____Helped me learn more about the meaning of sex stereotyping.

_____Helped me see how others think.

_____Was not interesting.

_____Other_____

Please explain your answers:

2) NUMBER OF PICTURES USED: (check one)

_____Four pictures were enough to start discussion without being too much work.

_____Four pictures were too many.

_____Four pictures were too few.

The reason I marked this answer was:

3) BLANK PICTURE: (check as many as apply and finish the sentence)

_____Responding to the blank picture was interesting because _____

_____.

_____Responding to the blank picture made me think about my future because _____

_____.

_____Responding to the blank picture was hard because _____

_____.

Questionnaire for Students 

4) NUMBER OF SESSIONS: (check one)

_____Three sessions were enough to write responses and have worthwhile class discussions.

_____Three sessions were too many.

_____Three sessions were too few.

The reason I marked this answer was:

5) GRADE LEVEL: (We have tried these materials in grades 8 and 12. What is your opinion about the grade that would be best? Check either or both.)

_____It could be used in any junior high school grade.

_____It could be used in any senior high school grade.

Comment on why you answered as you did:

6) TECHNIQUE: (check as many as apply)

The technique of looking at pictures, writing, and then discussing responses:

_____Was worthwhile even though it took time.

_____Was time-consuming and not worthwhile.

_____Made me think differently about certain things than I had before.

_____Did not make me think differently.

_____Was fun.

Comment on why you answered as you did:

YOUR GENERAL COMMENTS, REACTIONS, OR SUGGESTIONS ON FOCUS ON THE FUTURE (Please feel free to continue your response on the reverse side of this sheet):

APPENDIX B

Leader Comment Forms

Leader Comments

Session One:

Name_____School_____Date_____

## Leader Comments

Session Two:

Name_____ School_____ Date_____

Leader Comments

Session Three:

Name_____ School_____ Date_____